

Navy Prioritizes PCS Moves

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MILLINGTON, Tenn. (NNS) -- Permanent Change of Station (PCS) moves will soon be restarting using a conditions-based, phased approach and Navy Personnel Command (NPC) is poised to ensure that high priority sea duty units remain manned and ready to preserve maritime superiority.

“The current stop movement policies have impacted 42,000 sets of officer and enlisted orders,” said Capt. Derek Trinque, director of the Career Management Department at NPC.

“We will use every option available to maintain fleet readiness and will prioritize all PCS moves based on the impacts to readiness rather than solely on a Sailor’s Projected Rotation Date (PRD) for those transferring.” These options include prioritization of move timing based on the priority of billets, incentivizing sea duty and adjustment of estimated dates of detachment (EDDs).

To account for local restrictions that will persist after the initial relaxations, the flow of orders will begin in stages as areas open. Local Health Protection Condition (HPCON), international, state and local government policies will be considered when scheduling PCS transfers. Eliminating the backlog of orders could extend beyond the end of calendar year 2020.

The emphasis on operational readiness and unit prioritization reflects the Navy’s identity as a sea service and focusing on filling billets at sea is critical to preserving the readiness of the fleet. High priority sea duty commands include those designated as operational sea duty.

These commands include strategic and Special Operations Forces, Forward Deployed Naval Forces (FDNF) and Optimized Fleet Response Plan (OFRP) units with a published manning date that is normally 12-months prior to the deployment date.

Priority will also be given to specific accession pipeline billets such as to ensure new officers and enlisted continue to report to their fleet units. Additionally, consideration will be given to key milestone and special program billets. NAVADMIN 169/20, released June 12, lists the full ordered priority list for billets.

The list of priorities was guided by the Commander, U.S. Fleet Forces Command/Commander, U.S. Pacific Fleet Notice 1000 of August 16, 2019, which explains sea manning unit target levels and stakeholder responsibilities. Officers and enlisted personnel with retirement or fleet reserve orders and enlisted personnel with End of Active Obligated Service (EAOS) dates before their PRD who do not intend to re-enlist will be exempt from this direction.

“It is critically important that leaders talk with Sailors approaching their EAOS to determine if there is an intent to separate or retire, and forward that information immediately to NPC so a backfill for sea duty billets can be prioritized,” said Trinque. “We really need commands to tell my team at PERS-4013 immediately so we can ensure a face-to-face turnover at high priority sea duty commands. I also encourage leaders in every command to talk to their Sailors about the incentives we already offer for voluntary extensions at sea.”

To maintain unit readiness, detailers will prioritize face-to-face reliefs for billets at high priority commands. Service members transferring to a high priority command will move first and may have their shore duty shortened by up to six months. In contrast, Sailors transferring from high priority commands, regardless of their original estimated departure date, will move last and could be extended at their current duty location for up to six months. This will happen on a case-by-case basis in order to ensure a face-to-face relief.

Involuntary extensions beyond six months will only occur under the most unusual circumstances. All Sailors are encouraged to consider the incentives for voluntary extensions. A list of eligible skills can be found at <https://www.mnp.navy.mil/group/pay-and-benefits>.

In each case NPC will work with each gaining and losing command to evaluate potential impact to readiness if the billet gaps. Detailers at NPC are currently in the process of contacting all officers and enlisted Sailors with orders between March-September 2020 to evaluate potential hardships. To add flexibility, service members with dependents are authorized to delay dependent travel (DDT) up to 180 days from their transfer date. Service members with dependents in school (K-12) will be authorized DDT until the end of the school year or 30 June 2021, whichever occurs first.

For Sailors conducting a PCS to or from areas remaining under stop movement conditions, the exemption and waiver processes put in place will continue to apply. PCS orders will continue to include Restriction of Movement (ROM) periods for Sailors traveling to or from these areas, to include intermediate stops. Travel may be restricted even between areas which are open for PCS if the travel includes an intermediate stop (I-stop), layover, or airline connection in an area which remains under stop-movement.

Service members, DoD civilians, and dependents on PCS orders to OCONUS locations requiring a no-fee passport must submit passport applications to their local passport acceptance facility no earlier than 60 days and no later than 45 days from the departure date. If a visa is also required, the passport application must be submitted no earlier than 80 days and no later than 65 days before departure date. Failure to adhere to these timeframes increases the chance that command-sponsored dependents will not receive their passport and/or visa in time to travel concurrently with their DoD sponsors.

To ensure it is easier for Sailors to execute a PCS move through this trying time, multiple new programs created as part of the Navy's ongoing pay and personnel transformation efforts are available. Initiatives like the MyNavy Career Center with 24/7 contact agents on standby for support, MyPCS Mobile app and the newly added ability for service members to use their Government Travel Charge Card during a PCS dramatically decreases the stress of a PCS. To find out more visit npc.navy.mil or call MNCC at (833) 330-MNCC (6622).

For more information, read NAVADMIN 169/20 at www.npc.navy.mil.

The latest DoD policies can be found at: <https://www.defense.gov/explore/spotlight/coronavirus>.

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